

## REMARKS

Without acquiescing to the propriety of the rejections in the final Office Action dated July 6, 2006, claims 1, 3, 6, 8-10, 13 and 15 have been amended, claim 5, 12, 17-18 have been canceled, and new claim 19 has been added. Entry of these amendments, reconsideration of the application, and allowance of all claims pending herein are respectfully requested in view of the remarks below. Claims 1-4, 6-11, 13-16 and 19 are now pending.

### **§ 102 Rejections:**

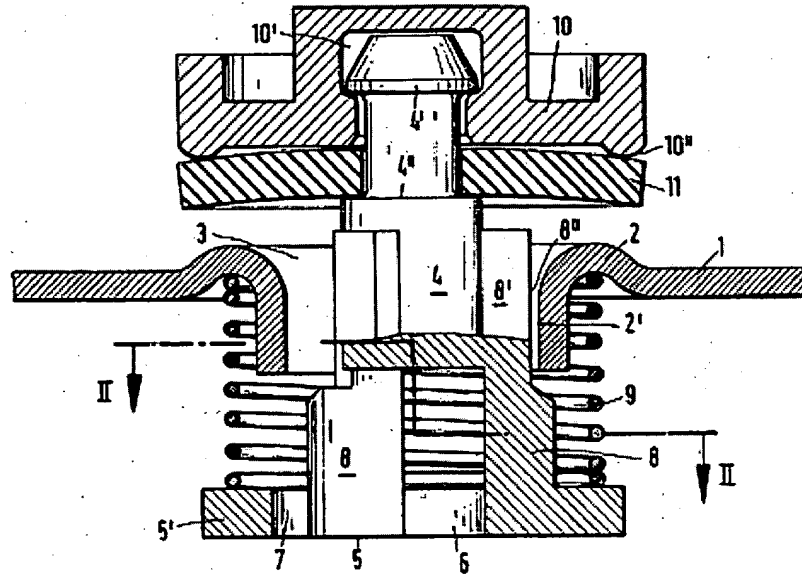
Claims 1-4, 6-11 and 13-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,056,121 to Gerdes.

Amended independent claim 1 of the present application recites, *inter alia*, a check valve comprising a body configured to permit fluid to flow therethrough. The body includes a flange extending circumferentially around an inner periphery of the body. The flange has an inner surface defining a valve aperture. The check valve further comprises a poppet valve moveably mounted within the valve aperture. The poppet valve includes a longitudinal axis, a head, a continuous annular ring and a plurality of guide legs between the head and the continuous annular ring. The plurality of guide legs extends from the head and through the valve aperture. Each of the plurality of guide legs includes an outer peripheral surface facing the inner surface of the flange. The outer peripheral surface includes a radial first section, a radial second section, and a radial third section. The radial second section is recessed back from the radial first section and the radial third section in relation to the inner surface of the flange. The radial first section and the radial third section are at the same radial distance from the longitudinal axis.

Amended independent claim 8 recites an outer peripheral surface including a first section spaced at a first radial distance from the longitudinal axis, a second section spaced at a second radial distance from the longitudinal axis to allow debris to pass between the second section and the inner surface of the flange while the valve is in an open position, and a third section spaced at the first radial distance from the longitudinal axis, wherein the first radial distance is greater than the second radial distance. Amended independent claim 15 recites a flow path being defined between a recessed section of the radial outer peripheral surface and the inner surface of the flange while the poppet valve is in an open position to allow for debris to pass between the radial outer peripheral surfaces and the inner surface of the flange. The recessed section is at a first radial distance from the longitudinal axis and all other sections of the outer peripheral are at a second radial distance from the longitudinal axis.

Applicant recognized that a portion of the outer peripheral surface of each of the plurality of guide legs being recessed, cut back or at a smaller radial distance from the longitudinal axis of the poppet valve from the rest of the outer peripheral surface of each guide leg provides for self cleaning of the valve by allowing debris to pass through the valve while preventing the lodging of the guide legs by debris in the valve aperture. The poppet valve moves around more with the recessed or cut back sections during operation, which assist in shaking or cleaning out debris that, in the past, lodged between the guide legs and inner surface of the flange. See Specification, paragraph [0007].

In contrast, Gerdes (U.S. Patent No. 4,056,121) discloses a pressure compensation valve arrangement shown below:



The pressure compensation valve arrangement disclosed in Gerdes has a valve head 10 and a valve stem 4. The valve stem extends through the valve hole 3. The valve stem 4 has three vane-like ribs that are spaced over the circumference of the stem 4 with outer edges 8". Each rib has an upper rib portion 8' extending lengthwise of the stem 4 and a lower rib portion 8 extending from the upper rib portion 8' to the flange 5'. Each lower rib portion 8 has a larger cross-sectional dimension than the upper rib portion 8' for strengthening the flange 5. The outer peripheral surface of each rib includes a first outer surface 8'' at a first radial distance from the center longitudinal axis of the stem 4, a second outer surface (i.e. outer surface of rib portion 8) at a second radial distance from the center longitudinal axis of the stem, and a third outer surface extending between the first and second outer surfaces that increases in radial distance from one end connecting to the first outer surface to the other end connecting to the second outer surface (i.e. the diagonal line shown above between 8'' and the outer surface of rib portion 8).

Gerdes does not disclose two sections of the outer peripheral surfaces being at the same radial distance from the longitudinal axis, as required by the claims of the present invention. Instead, the outer peripheral surfaces of each rib portion disclosed in Gerdes are all at different

radial distances from the longitudinal axis. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the above anticipation rejections of claims 1-4, 6-11, 13-16 and 19 are now overcome and withdrawal of this grounds for rejection and allowance of these claims are respectfully requested.

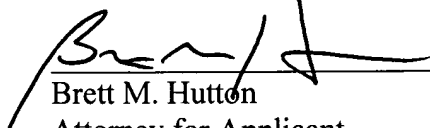
#### CONCLUSION

For all of the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1, 8 and 15 are patentable over the applied prior art. The dependent claims are believed allowable for the same reasons noted above in connection with independent claims from which they directly or ultimately depend, as well as for their own additional features.

It is believed that the application is in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested. If a telephone conference would be of assistance in advancing the prosecution of the subject application, applicants' undersigned attorney invites the Examiner to telephone him at the number provided. If any extension of time is required for this Response, the Office may charge Deposit Account No. 081935 of the undersigned.

Dated: September 5, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

  
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